

CITY OF NEWTON

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2008

Present: David Koses (Transportation Planner) Jerome Grafe (Resident Member) Ald. Danberg, Sergeant Jim Norcross (Police) Nina Wang (Assistant Traffic Engineer) Rosalie Myers (Clerk). Also Present: Ald. Ald. Brandel, Gentile, Harney, Lennon, Linsky and Sangiolo.

#HP20-08 NOREEN KIMBALL requesting a handicapped parking space at 24-26 Dale Street. (Ward 2)

ACTION: **HELD 5-0 (60-DAY TRIAL APPROVED)**

NOTE: The petitioner, Noreen Kimball was present and explained that she no longer could drive but needed a handicapped space for a van to pick her up.

Nina Wang visited the site about a dozen times and noted parking was always available on-street. The petitioner noted that a van picks her up and drops her off several times per week, and that there is often a car parked in the space nearest to her house, making it difficult to access the van. David Koses stated that Traffic Council does not typically receive requests to approve an on-street residential handicapped parking space for a resident who does not own a vehicle. David Koses distributed a draft residential handicapped parking space guidelines, which, if adopted by Traffic Council, may be used to help guide Traffic Council decisions regarding approval of handicapped parking spaces in the future.

Sgt. Norcross made a motion to institute a 60-day trial of a 20-foot “No Parking” zone. (Residents will be notified when item is scheduled for discussion). The Committee voted 5-0 to approve the trial.

#TC36-08 ALD. LENNON & SALVUCCI on behalf of Esther Marchioni of 127 Linwood Avenue, requesting a discussion of parking restrictions on Linwood Avenue, specifically TPR-176, *Linwood Avenue* (1) Prohibited, all days: b) South side from Bridge Street to opposite Colonial Avenue. (Ward 1)

ACTION: **HELD 5-0 (60-DAY TRIAL APPROVED)**

NOTE: Ald. Lennon and Esther Marchioni were both present for this discussion. Currently there is a restriction on the south side that abuts two parking lots (property of company on Bridge Street) and on a portion of the north side of Linwood Avenue. There is also a business across from 127 Linwood that results in some parking on Colonial Avenue. Sgt. Norcross suggested a trial before any permanent changes are made. David Koses suggested lifting the restriction on most of the northern section between Melbourne and Bridge Street with the exception of the corner. Ald. Danberg made a motion for a 60-day trial of a “no parking” restriction along the residential (north) side of Linwood Avenue between Bridge Street & Colonial Avenue along with no restrictions on the south side of Linwood Avenue between Bridge and Colonial.

The Council approved 5-0 the 60-day trial.

#TC37-08 ALD. LENNON on behalf of Riverside Community Care, 64 Eldredge Street, requesting a discussion of parking restrictions on Eldredge Street, specifically TPR-176 *Eldredge Street* (3) Prohibited, 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.: a) West side, from Vernon Street to Church Street. (Ward 1)

ACTION: **NO ACTION NECESSARY 5-0**

NOTE: The Committee voted no action necessary on this item with the understanding that Ald. Lennon would continue to work with Riverside Community Care.

#TC2(2)-08 ALD. SANGIOLO, HARNEY & GENTILE on behalf of residents on Wolcott Street requesting that the traffic control signal located at Wolcott and Lexington Streets be moved to a different location or removed altogether. (Ward 4)

ACTION: **REFERRED 5-0 TO PUB. SAFETY/TRANS. COMMITTEE** (Recommend that an outside traffic consultant be hired to conduct a traffic study of this section of Lexington Street.)

NOTE: This item had been discussed in February of 2008 where Traffic Engineer Clint Schuckel explained the cost of moving the traffic light would be approximately \$50,000 and a completely new signal would cost approximately \$150,000. At that time it was noted by Mr. Shuckel and Mr. Koses that a trial that would turn off the light would cause public safety issues.

A large number of people (approximately 40 residents) were present for this discussion) The discussion stressed safety issues involving site lines, light synchronization, as well as large volumes of traffic.

Nina Wang suggested adding a "Do Not Block Intersection" sign southbound on Lexington Street at Wolcott Street to try to discourage motorists from blocking the intersection

Mr. Koses suggested that the City use traffic mitigation funds to hire an outside consultant to examine various engineering issues that had been discussed. Ald. Sangiolo was receptive to this approach and reiterated that this neighborhood really needs a great deal of attention. She mentioned the crosswalks which still have not been painted causing concern for residents. Jerome Grafe also stressed the crosswalk repainting.

Ald. Sangiolo asked that the Traffic Council strongly support the crosswalk painting as soon as possible as it is a current safety hazard and really needs to be accomplished.

The Council voted to recommend this item be sent to Public Safety/
Transportation Committee.

#TC46-08 ALD. SANGIOLO, HARNEY, GENTILE requesting a stop sign on Islington Road at “Islington oval.” (Ward 4)

ACTION: **APPROVED 5-0 AS AMENDED** (Yield sign at south/eastbound Islington Park at the intersection of Islington Rd., along with a solid line rounding the Islington Road curve in the vicinity of Islington Park)

NOTE: Ald. Sangiolo said during a neighborhood meeting with Islington Road residents issues such as speed, traffic, turning movements onto Islington Road and visibility were raised. During the public comment period, some residents wanted a stop sign and others preferred a yield sign.

Sgt. Norcross noted that this area does not meet the warrants for the stop sign and he would be reluctant to support a stop sign at that location. He said that a yield sign would be helpful in this area. Chairman Koses was in agreement. Nina Wang said that the intersection would not meet the warrants for a stop sign based on volume and recommended a yield sign along with a painted centerline rounding the curve of Islington Road, so to indicate the curve of the main road.

#TC40-08 ALD. BRANDEL requesting the installation of a stop sign on Dickerman Road at Lincoln Street. (TPR-147 Stop Signs) (Ward 5)

ACTION: **APPROVED 3-2.** Norcross, Wang against (stop sign on Dickerman Rd. (northbound) at the intersection of Lincoln Street; stop sign on Dickerman Rd. (southbound) at the intersection of Lincoln Street).

NOTE: Ald. Brandel addressed the Committee and noted that there are not currently any stop signs, in any direction, at this four-way intersection, and that traffic travels at high speed going down Lincoln Street in order to get to Woodward Street. The proximity of the Eliot MBTA Station causes a good deal of traffic. It was also noted that residents had suggested a 4-way stop.

In her PowerPoint presentation Ms. Wang showed that the main flow of traffic was on Lincoln Street. Many left turns from Lincoln Street onto Dickerman Road were noted. Traffic on Dickerman Road was very light. No stop sign warrants are met. She recommended against adding stop signs at this location. Police Department records show no reported accidents occurred at this intersection during the past three years.

Mr. Koses noted that Lincoln Street is the major road and Dickerman is the minor road and he recommended the installation of two stop signs to clarify right-of-way. Jerome Grafe agreed that right-of-way is not clear, and, despite the low

volumes, he felt that two stop signs are appropriate. Ald. Danberg also spoke in agreement.

Sgt. Norcross felt consistency was important. Nina Wang reiterated the volume and accident reports do not show the need for stop signs. Sgt. Norcross wanted to go on record to say that when the Council makes a decision, it should use available information such as traffic counts and accidents.

Jerome Grafe made a motion that Traffic Council approve two stop signs as discussed (one on Dickerman Road northbound and one on Dickerman Road southbound).

#TC41-08 ALD. BRANDEL requesting a study of the intersection of Lincoln Street and Woodward Avenue for possible installation of a stop sign or traffic control signal. (Ward 5)

ACTION:

NAN 5-0

NOTE:

Ald. Brandel said this is a very busy intersection. He stressed that pedestrians encounter difficulty when crossing the intersection. Nina Wang did a traffic warrant analysis and explained that at least a few warrants should be met to consider a traffic light. Her report did not demonstrate a need for a traffic signal at this location. She did recommend larger, more visible stop signs to allow motorists better visibility.

Dick Hutchinson of 160 Lincoln Street said the present arrangement is an improvement over the previous one, which had only two stop signs.

Traffic Council voted to take no action, and to request that the Public Works Department replace the current 24" stop signs with new 30" stop signs.